

CLAIMS

1. A printer for printing a collated multi-page document when presented with a plurality of manually collated pages, the printer including:
- 5 (a) a code sensor which senses machine-readable codes on the manually collated pages;
- (b) a control unit which uses the machine-readable codes to identify and retrieve previously stored electronic versions of the pages; and
- (c) a print engine which prints the retrieved pages.
- 10
2. A printer according to claim 1 further including a binder for binding together the printed pages.
3. A printer according to claim 1 further including a scanner for copying pages
- 15 which do not have machine-readable codes on them and which produces electronic versions of the pages.
4. A printer according to claim 3 further including a storage medium which stores the electronic versions of the scanned pages.
- 20
5. A printer according to claim 1 further including a hand-held code sensor which senses machine-readable codes on the manually collated pages.
6. A printer according to claim 1 or 5 wherein the machine-readable codes on the
- 25 manually collated pages are represented:
- (a) optically; or
- (b) electronically; or

- (c) magnetically; or
- (d) topographically; or
- (e) chemically.

5 7. A printer according to claim 1 or 5 wherein the code sensor senses machine-readable codes on both sides of the manually collated pages.

8. A printer according to claim 1 wherein the control unit also controls communications between the printer and one or more peripheral devices.

10

9. A printer according to claim 1 wherein electronic versions of the manually collated pages which are to be printed are retrieved from at least one of the group including:

- (a) a storage medium contained within a host computer;
- 15 (b) a server which is accessed over a computer network;
- (c) a storage medium contained within the printer itself; or
- (d) any combination of the above.

10. A printer according to claim 1 further including an input device with which a
20 user of the printer controls the format of the printed and collated multi-page document.

11. A printer according to claim 10 wherein the input device includes a touch sensitive display.

25 12. A printer according to claim 1 wherein the print engine also prints machine-readable codes onto a page, and wherein the machine-readable codes are not visible to human vision.

13. A printer according to claim 2 wherein the printer inserts blank pages in the printed document to duplicate blank pages contained within the manually collated pages.

5 14. A printer according to claim 1 wherein instructions from a hand-held code sensor are received and interpreted, and a collated multi-page document is produced.

15. A printer according to claim 1 further including an interface which transmits instructions for printing a collated multi-page document to a second printer.

10

16. A printer according to claim 15 wherein the instructions are transmitted over a computer network or over a telephone network.

15 17. A printer according to claim 1 further including a storage medium which stores an electronic version of pages which have been printed.

18. A method of printing a collated multi-page document when presented with a plurality of manually collated pages, the method including the following steps:

20 (a) sensing machine-readable codes on the manually collated pages using a code sensor;

(b) using the machine-readable codes to identify and retrieve previously stored electronic versions of the pages; and

(c) printing the retrieved pages.

25 19. A method according to claim 18 further including the step of binding together the printed pages.

20. A method according to claim 18 further including the steps of using a scanner for copying pages which do not have machine-readable codes on them and producing electronic versions of those pages.

5 21. A method according to claim 18 wherein the step of printing the retrieved pages includes printing machine-readable codes on those pages.

22. A method according to claim 18 or claim 21 wherein the machine-readable codes are invisible.

10

23. A method according to claim 18 wherein the code sensor senses machine-readable codes on both sides of the manually collated pages.

24. A method according to claim 18 further including the step of using an input
15 device to control the format of the printed and collated multi-page document.

25. A method according to claim 18 wherein the printing step includes the sub-step of transmitting the retrieved pages to a remote printer.

20